

REMARKS

The Examiner's comments from the Office Action mailed June 28, 2007 have been carefully considered. Claims 1-12 remain pending in the application and claims 13-20 have been newly added. Claims 1, 5-9, and 12 have been amended. Support for these changes can be found throughout the specification and figures, e.g., in FIG. 1. No new matter has been added.

Reexamination and allowance of the pending claims is respectfully requested.

102 Rejections

Claims 1 and 3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by European reference no. EP 0460223 to Ito et al (hereinafter "Ito"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 1 recites, in part, a printed circuit board having plug-in regions defined by cutouts and including contact pads arranged on a front and a rear of the printed circuit board.

In contrast, Ito does not disclose or suggest a printed circuit board having plug-in regions defined by cutouts and including contact pads arranged on a front and a rear of the printed circuit board. Rather, in Ito, the printed circuit board appears to have contact pads on only one side. No reason is provided in Ito or elsewhere to modify the printed circuit board to include contact pads arranged on a front and a rear of the printed circuit board.

For at least these reasons, Ito does not anticipate claim 1. Claim 3 depends from claim 1 and is allowable over Ito for at least the same reasons. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claims 1 and 3 are respectfully requested. Applicants do not otherwise concede the correctness of the rejection and reserve the right to make additional arguments if necessary.

Claims 1-3, 8, 10, and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,166,894 to Kane (hereinafter "Kane"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 1 recites, in part, a printed circuit board having plug-in regions defined by cutouts and including contact pads arranged on a front and a rear of the printed circuit board.

In contrast, Kane does not disclose or suggest a printed circuit board having plug-in regions defined by cutouts and including contact pads arranged on a front and a rear of the printed circuit board. Rather, in Kane, the printed circuit board appears to have contact pads on only one side. Furthermore, no reason is provided in Kane or elsewhere to modify the printed circuit board to include a contact pad arranged on a front and a rear of the printed circuit board.

For at least these reasons, Kane does not anticipate claim 1. Claim 2, 3, 8, 10, and 12 depend from claim 1 and are allowable over Kane for at least the same reasons. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claims 1-3, 8, 10, and 12 are respectfully requested. Applicants do not otherwise concede the correctness of the rejection and reserve the right to make additional arguments if necessary.

103 Rejections

Claims 4 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kane in view of European reference no. EP 0410140 to Thalhammer (hereinafter "Thalhammer"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claims 4 and 5 depend from claim 1 and are allowable over Kane for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 1. Thalhammer does not overcome the shortcomings of Kane. Thalhammer also does not disclose or suggest a plug-in region of a printed circuit board that includes a contact pad arranged on a front and a rear of the printed circuit board. Furthermore, no reason is provided in Thalhammer or elsewhere to modify the printed circuit board to include a contact pad arranged on a front and a rear of the printed circuit board.

For at least these reasons, Kane would not lead a person skilled in the art to the invention of claims 4 and 5, even in view of Thalhammer. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claims 4 and 5 are respectfully requested. Applicants do not otherwise concede the correctness of the rejection and reserve the right to make additional arguments if necessary.

Claims 6 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kane in view of Thalhammer as applied to claims 4 above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No.

5,755,026 to Stephan et al. (hereinafter "Stephan"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claims 6 and 7 depend from claim 4 and are allowable over the combination of Thalhammer and Kane for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 4. Stephan does not overcome the shortcomings of Kane and Thalhammer. Stephan also does not disclose or suggest a plug-in region of a printed circuit board that includes a contact pad arranged on a front and a rear of the printed circuit board. Furthermore, no reason is provided in Stephan or elsewhere to modify the printed circuit board to include a contact pad arranged on a front and a rear of the printed circuit board.

For at least these reasons, Kane would not lead a person skilled in the art to the invention of claims 6 and 7, even in view of Thalhammer and Stephan. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claims 6 and 7 are respectfully requested. Applicants do not otherwise concede the correctness of the rejection and reserve the right to make additional arguments if necessary.

Claim 9 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kane in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,175,662 to DeBalko et al. (hereinafter "DeBalko"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 9 depends from claim 1 and is allowable over Kane for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 1. DeBalko does not overcome the shortcomings of Kane. DeBalko also does not disclose or suggest a plug-in region of a printed circuit board that includes a contact pad arranged on a front and a rear of the printed circuit board. No reason is provided in DeBalko or elsewhere to modify the printed circuit board to include a contact pad arranged on a front and a rear of the printed circuit board.

For at least these reasons, Kane would not lead a person skilled in the art to the invention of claim 9, even in view of DeBalko. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claim 9 are respectfully requested. Applicants do not otherwise concede the correctness of the rejection and reserve the right to make additional arguments if necessary.

Claim 11 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kane in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,496,803 to Smith (hereinafter "Smith"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 11 depends from claim 1 and is allowable over Kane for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 1. Smith does not overcome the shortcomings of Kane. Smith also does not disclose or suggest a plug-in region of a printed circuit board that includes a contact pad arranged on a front and a rear of the printed circuit board. Furthermore, no reason is provided in Smith or elsewhere to modify the printed circuit board to include a contact pad arranged on a front and a rear of the printed circuit board.

For at least these reasons, Kane would not lead a person skilled in the art to the invention of claim 11, even in view of Smith. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claim 11 are respectfully requested. Applicants do not otherwise concede the correctness of the rejection and reserve the right to make additional arguments if necessary.

New Claims

Claims 13-20 have been newly added. Support for these claims can be found throughout the specification and figures. No new matter has been added.

To the extent the above rejections apply to claims 13-20, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 13 recites, in part, an integral housing including closed webs arranged to extend between plug-in regions of a printed circuit board when the printed circuit board is arranged within the integral housing and slotted webs arranged to extend over the plug-in regions when the printed circuit board is arranged within the integral housing.

None of the cited references, either alone or in combination, disclose or suggest an integral housing including closed webs arranged to extend between plug-in regions of a printed circuit board when the printed circuit board is arranged within the integral housing and slotted webs arranged to extend over the plug-in regions when the printed circuit board is arranged within the integral housing. For at least these reasons, examination and allowance of claims 13-20 are respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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Signed: /Steven C. Bruess/
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